



NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2023

Volume XXXIII

No 3

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BEGINNING OUR 33RD YEAR OF SERVICE TO SMALL SCHOOL BANDS IN TEXAS

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

ANONYMOUS

In music education, some moments define the journey—moments that transcend the notes on a page and remind us why we do what we do. Last night, one of those moments unfolded as we accompanied our senior student to the TMEA All-Area Jazz Recordings. It's a tradition we've upheld for years, tirelessly preparing our students for that crucial performance, teaching them to embrace the artistry, and encouraging them to savor every second.

But it's not just about the performance; it's about the journey. We believe in the power of "the process" rather than "the outcome." So, we made it a point to dismiss our student from classes early to celebrate the day, just like I've done since 2006. This year, we ventured to Salt Grass Steakhouse, and as small school directors, we reveled in the simple joy of getting out early and enjoying a free meal. The food was a solid four-star rating, but it provided the backdrop for something far more precious—the unfolding heartwarming conversations.

In those moments, we learned about our student's love for dining out, the challenges her family faces due to her parents' work obligations, and her dreams of attending college with a music program embodying the values instilled in me by ATSSB. You see, I, too, was a product of ATSSB—a small-town kid shaped by the invaluable life lessons this organization imparts. It taught me to be a fighter, to take pride in my work, to lead, and above all, never to give up.

Throughout my career, most of those with ATSSB, I've realized that ATSSB is more than an organization; it's a brotherhood. It's the unwavering support of fellow band directors who are there for their students and colleagues in both triumph and failure. Last night, my assistant and I were the sole directors present at a TMEA Area Level recording, and it struck me that none of the students had the privilege of life-affirming conversations with their directors.

So, let this be a reminder to "Count Your Blessings." My first years of teaching are a testament to the blessings bestowed upon us by ATSSB. I miss you all and am grateful for the daily interactions with many of you. I hope other music organizations in our state follow the example set by ATSSB for over 30 years. Thank you, ATSSB, for being the backbone of our musical journey.

Bless you, all, and THANK YOU!

Anonymous letter from a former ATSSB member whose school is now 5A



DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENTS COLUMN

RODNEY BENNETT



We have made it through another marching season, and hopefully, it was successful for you and your bands. Congratulations to all the bands who advanced to the UIL Area Contests and then qualified for the UIL State Marching Band Championships in San Antonio. There were two weeks of outstanding and inspiring performances to see and hear! A special shout-out to the 1A UIL State Marching Band Champions - Menard High School - Rebekah Cook, 2A UIL State Marching Band Champions - Rivercrest High School - Elliot Ayo, 3A UIL State Marching Band Champions - Whitesboro High School - Charles Gardner, and the 4A State Marching Band Champions - Celina High School - Jon Weddle (back to back State Champions!) as well as Military Class: 4A - Lindale HS - Steven Moore, 3A - New Diana HS - Gary Fort, & 1A/2A-Carlisle HS - Chris Clifton. Every band participating at the UIL State Marching Band Championships is a winner and represents the very best of what we all strive to do with our band programs. Bravo, and well done!

Thanksgiving break has come and gone, and Christmas break is fast approaching. I hope you had a good pause in your routine and spent time with your family, getting some needed rest to recharge for the final days of the fall semester. Do your best to stay healthy and energetic for your students. Some of you still have upcoming marching band performances with your football teams in the playoffs. Enjoy the ride, and continue to make great memories with your kids. Knowing the challenges of preparing for region band auditions, Christmas concerts, and marching band all at the same time can be a real energy drainer.

Ensure you stay on top of the dates, deadlines, and procedures for your region auditions. This will ensure you get the students entered correctly and ultimately save you time and money. Late fees can become expensive, and you may have to answer questions as to why the students entered late. I bring this to your attention only to reinforce that there are possible consequences for not following audition entry procedures.

I hope we all realize how fortunate we are to have the opportunity to teach at our respective schools and positively impact students' lives. In checking with colleagues, this year has continued to be a challenge. There are holdover issues and concerns with student behavior, classroom etiquette, and what seems to be an overall lack of commitment. We must press on to create meaningful musical experiences in our daily rehearsals, emphasizing outstanding performances for our students and audiences.

ATSSB continues to serve the small school bands of Texas under the leadership of the Executive Board and Kenneth Griffin, our esteemed Executive Secretary. I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as President and learn from each of these colleagues. I hope that ATSSB continues to meet your needs as small school band directors of Texas.

I look forward to serving the association, directors, and students of the small schools of Texas. Don't hesitate to ask if I can ever assist you or your students.

Please check out your region's website for all the information regarding your region auditions. Also, refer to the ATSSB website for audition music errata



DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT-ELECT COLUMN

ANGIE LISS

It's hard to believe another marching season is behind us. And what a season it was! In true Texas weather fashion, it seems we faced every extreme. We endured record-breaking heat, and I know many of us had the first time (and hopefully last) experience of marching at the area level in torrential downpours! Congratulations to everyone just for surviving and those who advanced to the area and state levels. The competition seems to get fiercer each year, which is a testament to the work you are doing in your programs. Special congratulations to the UIL State Champions at each level: Open Class: 4A-Celina HS (Jon Weddle), 3A-Whitesboro HS (Charles Gardner), 2A-Rivercrest HS (Elliott Ayo), 1A-Menard HS (Rebekah Cook) and Military: 4A-Lindale HS (Steven Moore), 3A-New Diana HS (Gary Fort), & 1A/2A-Carlisle HS (Chris Clifton).



I'm sure many of you have already heard some version of this following phrase—"I bet you're glad marching band is done. Now you can rest!" Hopefully, you didn't resort to physical violence and were able to respond kindly. But we all know the band world never stops turning, and the end of marching brings all-region auditions/clinics, Christmas concerts, and parades, followed closely by solo/ensemble and concert season. And then, of course, the TMEA Convention is right around the corner. I hope you've got hotels secured and are planning for a productive time of learning and connecting with peers. We have so much to learn from each other. But to be at your best for TMEA and all the second-semester events, you must take care of yourself. I've said this before, and I'll say it again and again in the future, but please remember to take some time to rest during the holiday break. It's okay to have conversations that don't involve band and not to check your email. (Full disclosure: I don't follow my own advice, but I'm working on it—especially if the grandkids are in town!

If you have questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact me. I am a chronic insomniac, so a late-night call, text, or email will always be okay. If I can't answer, then I will get back to you as promptly as possible. I am here to serve you, so let me!

Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, Happy Kwanza, Happy New Year, and all the other Happys and Merrys I might have missed. Enjoy some time away from school with family and friends and even some peace and quiet. Hope to see you in February!



DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

PAST PRESIDENT COLUMN

MATT KNIGHT



Hello from West Texas! Wow, where did the Fall go? It seems like we just got home from TBA and started marching band. I hope everyone enjoyed a great run this marching season. Watching everyone post about their bands and keeping up with the results has been great fun.

We are truly blessed to have many great small school bands in Texas. Congratulations to all the bands that advanced to Area Contest, the ones that advanced to Area Finals, and the UIL State Marching Contest. What a ride!! I hope you accomplished all the goals you set for your program this Fall. Remember, a successful marching season is not the same for every program. It is not the number of trophies on the shelf. Did you get better each day? Did your kids get better with each performance? Did your parents and fans enjoy what you put on the field, and most importantly, did you and your students grow as a band family? The memories will outlast any trophy or medal.

As we finish marching season and move inside, I always hear the voices of Dr. Charles Traylor and Harold Bufe in my ear: "The best way to build bands and make kids better musicians is to participate in All Region Auditions and UIL Solo & Ensemble". We each have had people who have helped us along the way, and we are better because we have listened to their advice. I encourage you to get your students involved in the all-region process. I feel this is so important for middle school and high school students.

Also, jump into Solo & Ensemble with both feet. It makes your band so much better. If you have students that need more time to be ready for solos, try ensembles. Remember ensemble and solo parts, and they are learning to play together. If you need help finding suitable literature for your students, ask your neighbor down the road (or in West Texas, the next county). I know I speak for every director reading this; we would love to help another school in any way we can.

ATSSB is truly a service organization for small school bands in Texas. There are many ways to serve ATSSB locally, regionally, and at the state level. Contact your local region coordinator and ask how you can help. There are always folders to stuff and percussion to move. Most of the time, you just need to ask.

Have you ever considered serving as a band or percussion organizer for the All-State Bands? We are always looking for people interested in taking these projects on. If you want more information about one of these opportunities, please email me at mknight@abernathyisd.com.

ATSSB President Rodney Bennett, President-Elect Angie Liss, Executive Secretary Kenneth Griffin, and the rest of the executive board are some of the best people around. They each have servant hearts and are willing to help anyone anytime. ATSSB is truly blessed to have each one of them in leadership positions.

If I can ever be of any help to you, please do not hesitate to ask. On behalf of Anna Jo, Keelan, and me, please let me be one of the first to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Matt Knight



DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY COLUMN

KENNETH GRIFFIN

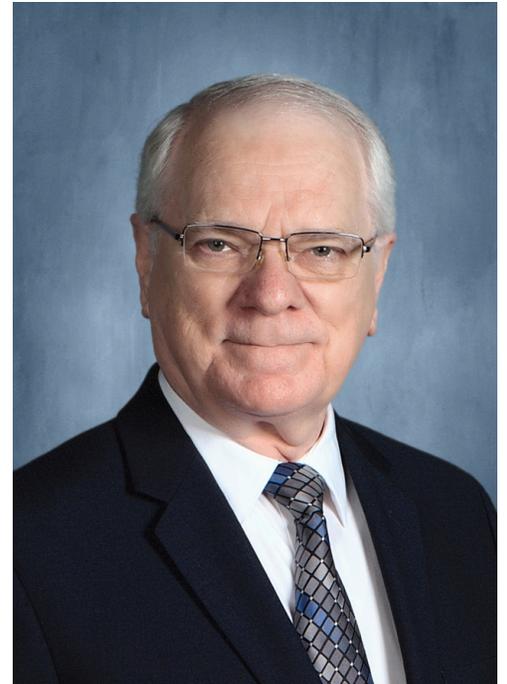
I hope the region audition process went well for all of you and that your students who advanced to Area are preparing for an even better audition for Area on January 6. Many of you will not have even started school after the holidays yet! Ensure you have paid the \$25 Area fee (most regions collect that and send one check).

The ATSSB All-State Symphonic Band clinician is Dr. Michael Golemo from Iowa State University. The ATSSB All-State Concert Band clinician will be William Owens, composer and retired educator. ATSSB has commissioned Mr. Owens to write a piece to be premiered by this ensemble. We also look forward to Noe Marmojelo from the University of Houston working with the ATSSB All-State Jazz Ensemble. ATSSB has commissioned Aaron Lington to write a piece for the 2024 ATSSB All-State Jazz Ensemble.

There are no forms needed for Area. Students selected to State will receive an email regarding housing, the Medical Release, and the Code of Conduct (requiring signatures) that they must bring to registration on Wednesday of the clinic, February 7, 2024. Students making ATSSB All-State (including the 20 ATSSB Jazz Ensemble students) need to make housing plans for the clinic. See the 2024 ATSSB All-State Housing Quick Guide in this Newsletter, which needs to be followed immediately after Area January 6.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Christina Smith, Brian Sours, and Marc Nichelson for their service to ATSSB the last two years as Class 2C/3C, Class 2A, and Class 4A Representatives, respectively, to the ATSSB State Board of Directors. A State office is a time-consuming but necessary to keep our Association strong and current for our small schools. These outgoing officers also contributed as members of the Executive Committee as it met to accommodate the needs of students and their directors in the interim between State Board of Director meetings.

Please not only thank our Licensees for their support but also use their services. These companies have paid a fee and are contracted to use the ATSSB logo and marks on their products. They pay a portion of their receipts to the ATSSB All-State Band Scholarship Fund. Please consider using them before any other companies offering the same or similar products. See the list elsewhere in this Newsletter. Also, be sure to ask anyone selling items at ATSSB activities (region concerts, etc.) if they are official ATSSB Licensees. This brings up a point regarding recorded examples of ATSSB audition music. The only officially approved recordings are those by Licensees. We realize some college and university faculty members make recordings. Still, you need to be careful they do not use their own editions or interpretations utilizing individual editorial changes that might confuse the student (and judges!) when auditioning. Ensure official ATSSB Licensees provide the recordings before purchasing them. Not only will you be maintaining consistent recording and performing standards, but you will also be supporting our Scholarship Fund since Licensees pay a royalty on all sales to the Fund.



A reminder about Piccolo and Eb Clarinet: If your flute player makes the All-State Band at the Area auditions on January 6 and would like to play piccolo, have them bring their piccolo to San Antonio. After regular chair auditions are completed for flute, we will hold separate auditions for piccolo in each band from among those students interested in it who were selected for their respective bands. If your clarinet player makes the All-State Band at the Area auditions on January 6 and would like to play Eb clarinet, have them bring their Eb clarinet to San Antonio. After regular chair auditions are completed for clarinet, we will hold separate auditions for Eb clarinet in the Symphonic Band from among those students interested in it that were selected for clarinet (the Concert Band will not use Eb clarinet). A notice concerning this policy will be placed in the flute and clarinet links they will receive at Area this year if they are selected for the All-State Band. Piccolo and soprano clarinet players will audition on the actual piccolo or soprano clarinet parts, and chair placement in their respective bands will have nothing to do with who is selected to play piccolo or Eb clarinet.

We plan to hold our ATSSB Business Session on Friday, February 9, 2024, in CC214 of the convention center at 2:30. Elections for Class 2C/3C, Class 2A, and Class 4A Representatives to the State Board of Directors will be held at that time. A short biographical sketch and picture of each candidate for state office who has submitted documentation can be found in this Newsletter. If any are missing, check back because biographies and/or pictures will be added when the candidates have submitted the information to the Newsletter Editor. An electronic ballot will be held in January to reduce the nominees to the top two vote recipients in each office for the ballot at the General Session (unless one person receives 51% of the votes cast in the electronic ballot).

When you get a chance, be sure to thank our Region and Area Coordinators for their efforts in securing audition panels, planning and executing region clinics and concerts, meetings, etc. Be sure to visit with your Region Coordinators about issues you wish to address at the upcoming State Board meeting. Make your opinions about issues confronting ATSSB known to your representatives to the State Board so they can be discussed with a consensus from the membership.

Thanks to all of you for your continued diligence and hard work on behalf of the students in our small school programs. Keep up the great work.



The ATSSB Newsletter is the official publication of the Association of Texas Small School Bands. Any correspondence should be addressed to ATSSB; 2117 Morse Street; Houston, TX 77019.

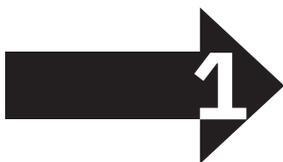
You may also contact us on our Web Site (www.atssb.org) or email the Editor (Marc Nichelson) at mnichelson@atssb.org or call 713-874-1151.

Letters to the Editor will be published as space permits if signed and verified, although writers may remain anonymous by request.

Advertising is accepted for the ATSSB Quarterly Newsletter. The Newsletter is published online

each September, December, March, and June. See our advertising policy and costs:
<https://www.atssb.org/files/execsec/AdPolicy.pdf>.

Online Entry: January 8–9, 2024



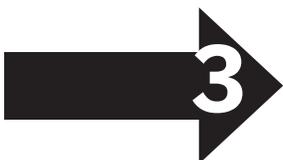
Log In

January 8–9: Go to www.tmea.org/AShousing. Log in to the housing system using your TMEA record (your email and password).



Enter Billing Information

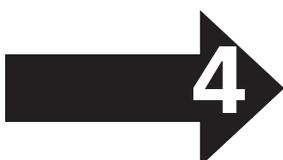
Enter credit card data to secure the reservation. (*This can be changed at check-in*). Click **Save**.



Verify Your Students

Click **My Student List** from the Navigation Links and verify that each of your All-State students is listed and their submitted gender is accurate.

If incorrect, contact Andrew Denman-Tidline, adenman@tmea.org, 512-452-0710, x109.



Create Rooms

Click **My Room List** from the Navigation Links

Select gender for the room occupants and click **GO**.

Your student list will display. Select students for the room **and** enter the chaperone's TMEA Member ID or 0 for a non-member.

Click **Create Room**.

*To find more students, click the drop-down to display students from your campus, district, region or Area. Click **GO**. To select someone who is not your student, **contact the director listed** to gain agreement.*



Create Your Chaperone Room (**DON'T SKIP!**)

Go to the **Create a Room** section. Select Chaperone. Click **GO**. Enter your TMEA Member ID. You can enter other TMEA IDs or non-member names for this room. Click **Create Room**.

You **MUST** complete this step to have a chaperone hotel reservation!

***One chaperone room per division per school is allocated.** TMEA will place at least one chaperone from a school district in the same hotel housing students from that district.*

***Note:** If another director entered your students, and you aren't sharing the chaperone room they submit, **create your own chaperone room!** A room will not be assigned for you.*



Print Your Room List

Go to **My Room List** and use your browser Print to print this page for your records. You will be notified by Jan. 16 of room assignments **Log Out of My TMEA**.

Don't Lose \$50!

When you submit your chaperone room via All-State Housing, a room will be reserved for you. If you previously made a reservation through the TMEA housing system, you **must cancel it by January 12** or you **will be charged a \$50 cancellation fee!**

Room Planning – Complete *before* January 8!

1. Work with other directors *before January 8* to plan rooms, each with four students.
2. Decide who will enter these rooms on January 8–9, and take this page home to complete that entry.
3. Log in January 8 to enter students into rooms and provide billing information.

*The housing system will allow you to select students assigned to you, or, from your campus, your district, Region, or Area. To select students other than yours, obtain agreement from their directors (their contact information will be listed with their students in the housing system). **The system does not automatically create chaperone rooms. Ensure you have one!***

Hotel Assignments

TMEA will create reservations for the students and chaperons submitted in the **Hyatt Regency Hotel**.

The maximum base rate (not including taxes) in this hotel is \$194 per room per night. When you receive room reservation confirmations from TMEA, they will specify this hotel, its room rate, and the total amount that will be due.

Combine Students for 4-Person Rooms

If you are working with other directors to fill rooms, agree on who will enter the room and document who will be housed together to help facilitate that entry to the housing system. You will need the Member ID of each student's hotel chaperone (or enter 0 for non-members).

Student	School/ISD	Chaperone ID

Student	School/ISD	Chaperone ID

Student	School/ISD	Chaperone ID

Combine Members for a Group Chaperone Room

If you are sharing a chaperone room with other directors, decide who will enter the chaperone room and note the directors' Member IDs here. You will enter the Member ID of each director sharing the chaperone room with you.

Member ID	Name	School	District



DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

STATE JAZZ COORDINATOR COLUMN

BRIAN DONNELL

Congratulations to all the students who participated in the jazz band audition process and their directors who guided them along the way. We have a very strong band seated for the 2024 All-State Jazz Band!

Our clinician this year is Mr. Noe Marmolejo from the University of Houston. He is the director of the Moores School Jazz Orchestra and is also the Jazz Division Head.

The band will also be premiering a piece by Mr. Aaron Lington that ATSSB has commissioned. The All-State Jazz Band will perform on Saturday, February 10, at 1 PM in Hemisphere Ballroom 1. Make sure to add the concert to your TMEA convention schedule!

We have three students who are returning members – Dylan Newcomb (tenor trombone, from Krum), Matthew Stanford (drums, from Davenport), and Nayati Ates (bass guitar, from Cumberland). This is Nayati's third year in the band!



The students and directors should have received specific information about the all-state weekend. If you did not, email Kenneth Griffin or me, and we'll get it to you. Directors with students in the all-state jazz band will soon receive an email from Michael Childs, the band's organizer, asking for help with chaperoning, sectionals, and more.

Did your region's jazz clinic/concert have an excellent clinician who programmed great music, related well to the students, and understood small-school students? If so, I would love to have that person's information to pass along to regions that ask about potential clinicians. Just shoot me an email with the specifics.

Numbers

For those curious about the numbers involved in the 2023-2024 Area auditions:

- 21 of 22 regions sent student recordings to Area auditions
- 347 students total were entered for Area – 396 is the maximum number of students possible (22 regions X 18 from each region)
- Jazz guitar had the fewest number of entries at 16
- Tenor trombone had the highest number of entries at 62
- number of entries from each Area – South (88), Central (87), North (70), East (62), West (40)

For those curious about the composition of the 2023-2024 All-State Jazz Band:

- 20 players in the jazz band – 5 saxes, 5 trumpets, 5 trombones, 5 rhythm section
- 7 regions have 2 students in the band, and 1 region has 3 students (Region 4)
- 3 schools have 2 students in the band – Sulphur Springs, Celina, and Krum
- 8 different regions are represented
- 4A schools have 16 members, 3A schools have 4 members
- Areas represented – North (6), Central (5), East (5), South (4), West (0)
- 14 seniors, 4 juniors, 2 sophomores, and 0 freshmen are in the band

All the best to you and your students as you enter the holiday season. I continue to be honored to serve ATSSB and welcome any comments and suggestions.

Brian Donnell
Greenhill School
bdonnell@atssb.org



DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE SERIES

COLLIN ANDERSON

I hope that each of you had a good Thanksgiving. As you wind down the fall semester and prepare for Christmas concerts and parades, I hope you slow down and rest as much as possible during the holiday season and be refreshed for the spring semester. With February not too far away, I want to remind all of our 2023 Outstanding Performance Series winners (1st place and runner-up march and 1st/2nd place and runner-up concert selections) that awards will be presented during the ATSSB general session at the TMEA annual convention. I hope each of you who earned an award can attend and receive your winner's plaque during the presentation. Remember that anyone who may have changed schools during the summer will still receive the award you earned in your previous position. I want to thank all of the judges at each level of this year's competition, especially for giving your time during the hecticness of the end of school, while you are on your off time during the summer, or taking time away from your TBA convention. Having great judges at the region, area, and state levels ensures that the most outstanding performances advance and then rise to the top at state. And, of course, thanks to all of the bands and directors who made the Outstanding Performance Series such a great success by accepting the challenge to strive to create such impressive musical performances. While the 1A OPS competition category continues to serve the 1A bands in ATSSB, the OPS Steering Committee will further investigate the proposal to create a non-varsity group category. However, no definitive plans have been made for the spring at this time. I wish you all the best in your Christmas, solo/ensemble, and spring UIL season preparations! Look for an email in the near future regarding the OPS process for the 2024 competition.



ATSSB Music Lending Library

Various regions send the music they purchase for all-region band clinics to Groesbeck High School after they use them so others can use the music in similar situations. We also send the All-State music to the Lending Library. If you would like to borrow a title, let them know. Contact Brian Boecker at Groesbeck High School, P.O. Box 559, Groesbeck, TX 76642 or call (254) 729-4117 between 10:10 and 11:00, fax him at (254) 729-5458, or email him at b.boeck@groesbeckisd.net. The only expense you will have is postage (both ways) as a courtesy to Brian and his staff. If you have music left over from an all-region clinic and would like to share it with other regions, send it to Groesbeck High School at the address above.

Here is the current list of titles available: <https://www.atssb.org/files/execsec/MusicLibrary.htm>

We would like to thank Collin Anderson, Brian Boecker and the Groesbeck band staff for providing this service to ATSSB members.



DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

WEBMASTER COLUMN

MARC NICHELSON



Celebrating the achievements within our Small School Bands and the broader band community is an incredible source of joy. Witnessing numerous schools perform at remarkably high levels is genuinely inspiring. Congratulations to the outstanding marching bands throughout this year's competitive season. Your commitment to upholding the tradition of excellence in our esteemed Texas Band community is commendable.

As we close out the dynamic marching season, our bands now turn their attention to the culmination of the semester. The reverberations of the marching band's spirited performances linger as students redirect their focus to the intricate harmonies and melodies poised for the stage. This shift marks a change in musical repertoire and symbolizes the culmination of unwavering dedication, extensive practice, and collaborative effort. The forthcoming concerts stand as a testament to each musician's collective commitment and diligence, poised to exhibit the artistic growth and prowess honed throughout the semester. With eagerness and anticipation, bands diligently prepare to enrapture audiences with a melodic presentation that mirrors their dedication and musical finesse.

As your Webmaster and 4A Representative, I sincerely thank everyone within the ATSSB Organization for allowing me to serve in such meaningful capacities. Being a former student in the early stages of the ATSSB, it has been immensely fulfilling to contribute to an organization that held significant value during my band career.

Website Projects Currently in the works:

1. As always please let us know if something on the site is not functioning the way it is intended or a resource you'd like to see on the website.
2. I'd also like to know if some of you would be willing to help submit materials, we can publish to our social media that would help small school band directors. These could be teaching resources, videos you've made giving a clinic on certain items, etc... This would be specific to Small Schools and something our audience would find beneficial to use in their programs. If interested, please contact me at mnichelson@atssb.org.
3. If you know of any business that would be interested in beginning an advertising relationship with us, please have them contact me at mnichelson@atssb.org.
4. I am also looking at digital media/site based locations (video clinics, podcasts, clinics at local schools, and even zoom hangouts) to continue adding opportunities for directors not only use our contests but have more wonderful resources given through our website. If you know of anything we can add PLEASE LET ME KNOW!



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STATE OFFICER NOMINEE BIOS

ELECTION

Class 2C/3C, Class 2A and Class 4A Representatives will be elected by secret ballot during the ATSSB General Session on Friday February 9th, 2024 at 2:30pm in CC214 . An electronic ballot will be cast in January to reduce the field to two nominees per office for the secret ballot at the General Session (unless one candidate gets 51% of the total votes cast in that office). Nominees who submitted a biography and/or picture by the time of publication are listed below Only current Retired and Active Members actively involved in 2C/3C middle schools (including the high school directors involved) may vote on 2C/3C Representative. Only current Retired and Active Members actively involved in Class 2A high schools may vote on 2A Representative. Only current Retired and Active Members actively involved in Class 4A high schools may vote on 4A Representative.



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CLASS 2C/3C REPRESENTATIVE NOMINEES



Megan Williams Seymore brings a decade of teaching experience to her role as the head band director at Alvarado Junior High in the DFW metroplex. Prior to her current position, Megan made significant contributions to the education landscape in Burleson, Texas, and Clovis, New Mexico.

Megan has distinguished herself graduating with a Bachelor of Music Education degree and a Master of Music degree in Flute Performance from West Texas A&M University in Canyon, Texas. Her time at WTAMU was marked by mentorship under the esteemed Russ Teweleit in music education and intensive flute studies with Helen Blackburn, Sally Turk, and Mark Trimble.

Throughout her career, Megan has led bands to notable achievements, including appearances in the ATSSB Outstanding Performance Series and unanimous first-division ratings at the Texas UIL Concert and Sight-reading Contest. A sought-after clinician and adjudicator across Texas, Megan is an active member of professional organizations such as the Association of Texas Small School Bands, Texas Music Educators Association, and Texas Music Adjudicators Association.

Beyond her dedication to music education, Megan is a fervent advocate for the transformative power of music in fostering creativity, empowering minds, and promoting personal growth. Off the podium, she channels her energy into two passions: golf and fitness. Megan embodies a harmonious blend of musical artistry, educational excellence, and a zest for life both on and off the podium.

“As someone deeply passionate about music education in small schools, it would be my utmost honor to be nominated for the 2C/3C State Representative. Your vote would not only support my dedication to music education but also empower me to make a positive impact in our community.”

Rachel Berg is the Head Middle School Band Director at China Spring Middle School in Region 8 and is running for ATSSB 2C/3C representative. She received her Bachelor of Music Education from Northwestern State University in 2016. Her teaching career started as the Assistant Band Director at Wortham ISD for one year before moving to China Spring where she has taught the last 7 years, first as a high school assistant, and currently as the head middle school director for the past 3 years. She currently teaches the CSMS Honor Band, beginner classes and assisting with the China Spring High School Band and Color Guard.

Under her direction, the middle school bands have continued their string of Superior ratings at the UIL Concert and Sightreading Evaluation and have been represented in the ATSSB OPS Competition at the state level. In Region 8, she holds the position of ATSSB Region 8 Webmaster and coordinates one of the region bands. She also served as a clinician for the CENTEX Honor Band in 2022. She is a member of ATSSB, TMEA, and TBA.

“Being nominated for the 2C/3C representative position is a great honor and I thank my region for the nomination. I love working with great people in my region and would love to extend that to the state level. I have always loved music education and the connections that we make with students no matter the size of your district and I believe that every student deserves every chance to succeed that we can give them. The students are why we do our job and I will always do my best to give them every opportunity available to them. This nomination gives me a chance to help schools all over the state and I would be honored to serve as the 2C/3C representative.”





DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

CLASS 2C/3C REPRESENTATIVE NOMINEES



Robin Weatherman is the Middle School Director of Bands in Burkburnett. She is currently in her 29th year of teaching and 16th year at BISD. She is a native Texan and received her Bachelor of Music from Angelo State University. She has one son, Jacob, who recently graduated Cum Laude with a degree in Industrial Automation and Electrical Technology.

Robin has spent the majority of her career teaching in small schools. Her 23 years of small school experience includes Robinson ISD and Tom Bean ISD and of course Burkburnett ISD. She also taught 3 years in Denison ISD and 3 years in Richardson ISD.

She has had many successful bands and honors throughout the years, including receiving 18 consecutive UIL Sweepstakes Awards. Her varsity band placed 6th in the 2017 State OPS Competition playing "Blue Ridge Reel" by Brian Balmages.

Robin has been a member of both ATSSB and TMEA for many years. She is a provisional member of TMAA and has had the privilege of judging UIL Concert and Sight Reading Contest in Region 8. Robin will be judging Region 30 this spring.

"It would be an honor and a cherished opportunity to serve as the Class 2C/3C State Representative. My experience in small schools with their challenges, as well as their advantages, gives me a strong understanding of the needs of this organization. If elected, I will use my experience and dedication to music education to represent Class 2C at the state level to the best of my ability."

Christina Smith - I am seeking re-election to the office of 2C/3C State Representative for ATSSB. I have served the students and membership for the past 7 years, and I would like the opportunity to continue the work I have started.

I am currently the band director at Center Middle School, where I have served for 19 years. Before teaching in Center, I taught 7th grade band for 2 years at Henderson Middle School. I have taught in ATSSB schools for 21 years and all my experience is at the middle school level. The bands at Center Middle School consistently earn "Sweepstakes" Awards at UIL Concert and Sightreading Contest and has grown to over 350 students in the middle school band program. In addition, the 8th grade band has participated in the ATSSB Outstanding Performance Series, and has had pieces advance to the Area and State Level of competition.

As the 2C/3C State Representative, I chaired the ATSSB Inclusion Committee and was charged with working with other directors to determine how best to serve students with special needs in our audition process. I am proud to report that our committee, after much research, proposed a rule change that allows for accommodations for students who need them. In addition, I served on the Executive Committee that planned the All State Experience at Melissa ISD and chaired the ATSSB Constitution Committee that presented amendments in February 2022. This past summer I chaired the Patch Committee that presented options to the State Board for updates to the Area Patch. Finally, I have served ATSSB by coordinating sectionals for the All State Bands since 2020.



I would appreciate your vote so that I can continue to work to serve you and your students.



DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

CLASS 2A REPRESENTATIVE NOMINEES



Brian Sours - I am currently serving my second term as the ATSSB 2A State Representative and I'm in my 10th year as the Director of Bands at Tenaha ISD (15th year teaching overall). While in Tenaha, I have built a state recognized band program by leading and working with talented staff members and hardworking students. The middle school and high school bands in Tenaha have consistently earned superior ratings and have won multiple ATSSB OPS "State Winner" distinctions. The high school band is a perennial State Marching Band Finalist and won the 2A State Marching Band Championship in 2021.

Prior to Tenaha, I served as Director of Bands in San Saba ISD from 2009-2014 where I led the middle school and high school bands to their first UIL Sweepstakes Award in school history. I also led the high school band to a 5th place finish at the 2013 State Marching Band Contest.

I hold a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from the University of Arkansas and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Stephen F. Austin State University and I'm a member of ATSSB, TMEA, TBA, and TMAA.

"I very much enjoy consulting with and serving directors and students in small schools as is evidenced through my experience as an All-State Organizer from 2018-2020 and as an ATSSB 2A State Representative since 2020. I look forward to helping guide ATSSB in the future."

Crystal Senzig - I graduated in 2000 from Hardin-Simmons University and started my teaching career in Whitesboro as the assistant director, then answered a call to be a junior high assistant in Alvarado. There I met Eric Senzig, my husband of 20 years. Our children are Ryan, a life skills senior in Groesbeck, and Richie and Maelynn, who are active band students in Riesel. I am currently in my fifth year as the head band director in Riesel, where my bands have made consistent superior ratings. I am currently a member of ATSSB, TMEA, and am a provisional member of TMAA for Concert and Sightreading. I have had the privilege of serving as CENTEX Honor Band Chairman, serving 1A-3A schools for the last three years, and enjoy hosting two invitational solo and ensemble contests each year.

As a graduate of a 2A high school myself, I believe that all students are capable of achieving their goals with the right people behind them encouraging, leading, and inspiring them. All band students deserve the chance to perform and compete at the highest level and feel the pride and accomplishment that comes with those successes. If chosen for the honor of representing 2A schools on the state level, I will work to help continue the strong tradition of excellence in our smaller schools.





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CLASS 2A REPRESENTATIVE NOMINEES



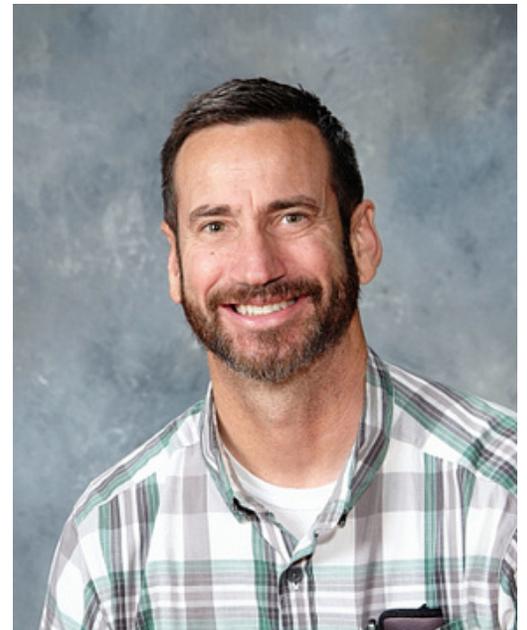
Justin Mauldin - I am honored to accept the nomination from Region 16 for ATSSB 2A State Representative. I am a graduate of Dumas High School (2000), and after graduating from Texas Tech University in December of 2004, I met the girl I would be with forever in May of 2005 and married her as quickly as I could in July of 2006! We have three boys: Daniel, Carter, and Will, and wouldn't trade them for anything in the world.

In 2005, I accepted my first teaching position as the assistant band director at Canadian High School (2A at the time). I spent the following two years as the assistant at Abernathy High School (2A at the time), and then four years as the assistant at Terra Vista Middle School in Frenship ISD (4A at the time, and then jumped to 6A). In 2012, I accepted my first head director position at Smylie Wilson Middle School in Lubbock, which feeds Coronado High School (5A) and spent three years rebuilding the program there. Longing to get back into small schools, I spent the next two years as the assistant director at Levelland High School (4A) and then took over the program at Ropes High School (1A at the time). I am now serving in my fifth year as the Director of Bands for Sundown ISD (2A).

The experience I have gained in the various larger and smaller classifications serve me well today in my 19th year of being a band director. I have an appreciation of the very different "worlds" that exist, and of course the unique challenges of small schools. As a proud member of ATSSB and TMEA, I have served in the past as the TMEA Region 16 Middle School Chair from 2012-2014 and am currently the organizer for the ATSSB Region 16 A/AA All-Region Band. It would be an honor to serve in the capacity of the ATSSB 2A State Representative, and I would certainly appreciate your vote.

Rob Hartman has been the Band Director at Anson High School in Anson, Texas for 24 years. Prior to that he was the Middle School Band Director in Hamlin and Early, and served in the U.S. Navy. He earned a Bachelor of Music degree from Howard Payne University and a Master of Music in Theory and Composition from Hardin-Simmons University. He lives in Anson with his wife, Caryn, and has three daughters - Caralyn, a junior education major at Angelo State playing flute in the Golden Ram Band; Cathryn, a freshman nursing major also at Angelo State; and Cristyn, a sophomore at Anson High School. He has been fortunate to have worked with successful bands throughout his career that have advanced to the state level in marching, TMEA Honor Band, and ATSSB OPS.

"I have spent my entire education career leading bands in small schools and am familiar with the challenges we have and how rewarding it is. If chosen, it would be a privilege to represent the outstanding 2A band programs in Texas."





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CLASS 4A REPRESENTATIVE NOMINEES



Marc Nichelson is currently seeking re-election for the Class 4A Representative. A graduate of Brownsboro High School, Marc earned his Associate of Arts in Music from Tyler Junior College and a Bachelor of Arts from Stephen F. Austin State University.

Post-graduation, he assumed the role of 7th-grade director at Hallsville ISD. Subsequently, he joined Wortham ISD, a small school in Central Texas, as the Director of Bands and Technology. Under his guidance, the program flourished, achieving notable success in marching and concert seasons. For the last 7 years, Marc has served as the Director of Bands at China Spring ISD, overseeing the Marching Band, conducting the Wind Ensemble and Jazz I ensemble, and instructing AP Music Theory. China Spring's Band Program has had a distinguished record of successes, just completing their 14th State Marching Contest Appearance, several ATSSB OPS State appearances, TMEA Honor Band State appearances, consistent ATSSB State Musicians, as well as receiving the UIL "Sweepstakes" award.

Furthermore, he actively contributes to ATSSB in multiple capacities, holding pivotal roles as the ATSSB Region 8 Coordinator, ATSSB Area Central Coordinator, ATSSB Webmaster, and the ATSSB 4A State Representative. His involvement allows him to pay forward the invaluable support he received as a student and offer guidance to numerous small school band students he encounters in his career. As a state board member he has over seen the ATSSB Website redesign, helped manage auditions at the Region, Area, and State level, and serves as the Newsletter Editor. He maintains professional affiliations with the Association of Texas Small School Bands, Texas Music Educators Association, Texas Music Adjudicators Association, and Kappa Kappa Psi National Honorary Band Fraternity.

Gary Jordan is the Band Director at Bullard High School, Region 21. He is in his 29th year as Director of Bands and 5th year as Fine Arts Director/Director of Bands for Bullard ISD. He and his wife, Tracy have four sons and daughters, and seven grandchildren. All four children were involved in the band program. He received his Bachelor and Master of Music degrees and Music Supervisor certification from Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches, Texas. Mr. Jordan is a member of ATSSB, TMEA, TBA, Phi Beta Mu, Phi Mu Alpha and Kappa Kappa Psi. He has served as Youth Choir Director and FBC Pittsburg, Texas, Minister of Music at FBC Bullard, Texas and Worship Pastor for 12 years at Green Acres Baptist Church South Campus before recently retiring from that position. Mr. Jordan currently serves as the UIL Region 21 1A-4A Advisory Committee member and the ATSSB Region 21 Region Jazz Coordinator.



The Bullard High School Band is a consistent UIL Sweepstakes Award winner and has advanced to the UIL State Military Marching Band Contest since its inception. The Panther Band has placed fourth place and in 2023 placed 3rd place receiving the Bronze Medal. In addition, the Panther Band has advanced to the state OPS competition and in 2023 placed 2nd at state for the Class 4A march. Mr. Jordan has taught in Class 3A, 4A, 5A and at the Community College level and believes these experiences have prepared him to tackle issues we all face in teaching band to students today. He grew up in a small school and band was a very important part of his life. "Teaching band in a small school has been a joy and a privilege. I enjoy introducing band to students and watching them grow into the band family, becoming successful, while juggling many extra-curricular activities."

"I am honored to be nominated for this position and I would be proud to serve the many outstanding small school band programs in Texas."



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CLASS 4A REPRESENTATIVE NOMINEES



Lance J. Finley is a native of Richmond (Booth), Texas. He is a class of 2000, graduate from B.F. Terry HS in Rosenberg, TX. He received his Bachelor of Music Education degree in 2005 from Stephen F. Austin State University, which is in Nacogdoches, TX and his master's degree in educational administration from Lamar University (Beaumont, Texas) in 2019. While working on his undergraduate degree, Mr. Finley was a member of the SFA Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, Swingin' Axes and Aces Jazz Ensembles, SFA Percussion Ensemble, Steel Drum Band and the Roarin' Buzzsaws Pep Band.

Lance Finley is currently the Director of Bands/Percussion Coordinator for the Needville Independent School District in Needville, Texas. He joined the Needville Band Staff in 2006 and serves as the Director of the HS Marching Band and Wind Ensemble. These ensembles have earned numerous Sweepstakes Honors and Superior ratings at Texas UIL regional/area and (independent) festival events.

Before coming to Needville, Mr. Finley was the Assistant Band Director and Percussion Coordinator for La Marque ISD in La Marque, Texas, where he oversaw all aspects of percussion from 6th through 12th grades.

Mr. Finley continues to be an active clinician and consultant for area schools. He is a member of (the) Association of Texas Small School Bands, Texas Bandmasters Association, and Texas Music Educators Association. Mr. Finley is an educational endorser for Pearl Drums/Adams Percussion and Salyers Percussion.

Michael Childs in his 31st year of teaching, currently serving his 21st year as the director of bands and fine arts department chair at Stephenville High School in Region 7. His teaching responsibilities include the high school marching band, wind ensemble, jazz ensemble and jazz combo as well as beginner woodwind classes. Bands under his direction have consistently received UIL Sweepstakes awards and his wind ensemble has been selected three times as a finalist in the ATSSB Outstanding Performance series. His band has also been selected to perform at the UIL State Wind Ensemble Festival three times. The Stephenville HS jazz ensembles are also competitive, their awards including: outstanding 4A band at the Texas Tech and UTA jazz festivals and outstanding in class jazz band and combo awards at the Tarleton Jazz Festival. Mr. Childs has held previous positions in Mexia, Abilene Cooper, and Millsap. He is a graduate of the University of North Texas, earning both his bachelor's and master's degrees at UNT.



Mr. Childs has been a proud member of ATSSB for 28 years. He is currently serving as the president of TMEA Region 7 and is the Region 7 Texas Band Masters Association representative. This year he is serving as the ATSSB Region 7 Jazz Coordinator and the 2024 All-State Jazz Organizer. He has also served in various capacities as Region and Area Honor Band host and Region, Area, and State Honor Band Judge. He is an active adjudicator with TMAA in concert and marching bands and has adjudicated jazz festivals as well. Mr. Childs is an active educator statewide, having served as a clinician for the Region 11 TMEA concert band, and Regions 2, 6, 8, and 25 jazz ensembles. Mr. Childs also mentoring several schools with concert and marching band clinics. He was selected to be a presenter at the Texas Bandmaster's Association in 2016. Mr. Childs continues to be an active performer, playing saxophone in the Tarleton Ultra Club Big Band and Granbury Jazz Orchestra.

His professional affiliations include ATSSB, TMEA, TBA, TMAA, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and is a recent inductee into Phi Beta Mu. Michael and his wife Stephanie have two children Caitlin & Cameron, both alumni of the Yellow Jacket Band.



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CLASS 4A REPRESENTATIVE NOMINEES



Ramon Parker was named Director of Bands for Gonzales High School in the Spring of 2023. My experience includes teaching high school band in classes 2A-5A throughout the state. I attended Texas State University, where I earned a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education and completed a Master of Music Degree at Northwestern State University, where he studied conducting and ensemble pedagogy with Dr. Kevin G. Richardson. Throughout my career my bands have always improved in both playing ability and culture. In my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my family and riding mountain bikes. I have been married to my wife, Dana, for 11 years and we have a daughter named Aurora and son named Maverick. Together they enjoy traveling and spending time with family and friends. I have served ATSSB region 18/26 in the past as region band coordinator and ATSSB region 12 as a conductor. I believe music has the power to change the life of a child regardless of the situation.

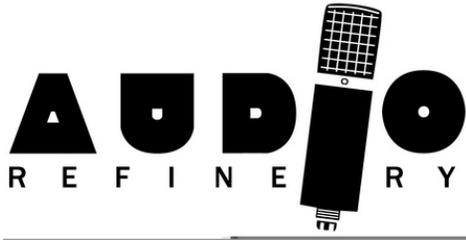
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Jordan Sound Productions
601 Ralson Street
Bullard, Texas 75757
903-539-6485
JordanSP@aol.com

